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SENSITIVE
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DEPARTMENT FOR AF, AF/SPG, D, INR, DRL, PRM

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SUBJECT: DARFUR PEACE TALKS: FINAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS ON
TABLE

REF: ABUJA 856

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The African Union Mediation put the final security arrangements text on the negotiating table April 22, which has generated serious discussions of the future status of the movements' forces between the Government of Sudan and the rebels. AU Special Envoy Salim Salim said he will put forward all elements of the entire peace package on April 25 and that he expects the international partners to deliver the parties. USDEL is actively facilitating small group discussions between the GOS and Sudan Liberation Movement faction leader Minni Minnawi, at the request of both parties. JEM also has expressed its desire for the presence of a USDEL member in its meetings with the GOS, but has yet to follow through on it. With VP Taha still in Abuja playing an active role, direct engagement between the GOS and Movements over key issues is intensifying now that the mediation has moved the final security arrangements paper forward. End Summary.

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AU MEDIATION
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¶2. (SBU) On April 22, African Union Special Envoy Salim Salim updated USDEL on the mediation's plans. Salim promised to put the entire peace package on the negotiating table on April 25. He stated that the AU's job was to put out a good package and the international partners' responsibility to get the parties' to accept it. Salim also expressed concern over a press statement in Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) faction leader Minni Minnawi's name, accusing the Government of Sudan of bad faith. The press statement also said that Minni would terminate participation in the talks if not concluded by April 30. USDEL advised Salim to look at Minnawi's statement as an opportunity to get the entire peace deal to the parties, instead of reacting as if it were a genuine threat. The AU Mediation did put the final security arrangements package on the negotiating table on April 22 and is holding discussions on the paper on April 24.

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TAHA CONSULTATIONS
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¶3. (SBU) Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Taha and members of his delegation continue consultations with the parties. Taha's dialogue with Minni Minnawi hit a small snag over differing understandings of what has been accepted in their meetings. USDEL is facilitating further dialogue to clear up and record meeting results at the request of both parties. On April 23, USDEL attended a meeting between Minni and Mutrif Sadiq to clarify the positions on the final security

arrangements on which there are different interpretations. On April 24, USDEL met with Taha in advance of his meeting with Minni. Taha explained his understanding of the positions of both sides on integration, returnees/IDPs, redeployment of SAF and allied forces, and a timetable. Taha asked whether the confusion is due to Minni's misunderstanding of the concept of integration, troubles within the movement, or confusion over the process of the discussions. USDEL said that it is difficult to determine exactly what caused Minni's apparent backtracking or perhaps misunderstanding, but that it could probably be overcome after more discussions.

¶4. (SBU) Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) members told USDEL that their meetings with Taha have been useful so far. A small working group was formed on power-sharing issues to work through the competencies of senior level representation at the center. JEM also has suggested that a USDEL member sit in on their discussions but have not pursued it any farther. For now, the GOS's strategy appears to be to secure agreement with Minni on security arrangements, one key issue on power-sharing with SLM's Abdelwahid Nur, with the conviction that JEM will follow suit.

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COMINGS AND GOINGS
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¶5. (SBU) AU Special Envoy Salim Salim arrived on April 21. JEM's Dr. Khalil Ibrahim is in N'Djamena, Chad. Eritrean Abdulla Jabbar arrived in Abuja aboard a Sudanese Government aircraft carrying Yasser Arman on April 27.

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ABUJA 00000889 002 OF 002

COMMENT
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¶6. (SBU) The release of the final security arrangements document gave the parties the opportunity to seriously discuss key sticking points on the future status of the movements forces and to open the way to presentation of the comprehensive package of all the texts. We expect a similar level of activity and engagement between the parties when the power and wealth-sharing documents are made public. Requests for USDEL facilitation of GOS-movement discussions, drafting assistance for the final package and continuing military technical assistance will likely increase on this final lap.
FUREY